

Agencies and Organizations Assisting Farmers

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL RESOURCES

28 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333
207-287-3871

“get real. get maine!”

a promotional branding campaign, to increase public awareness of Maine products. **Division of Market and Production Development, 287-3491**

Farmland Protection Program, 287-7520

Ag Business Planning Assistance

- **Farms for the Future**, administered jointly with Coastal Enterprises Inc., provides farmers grants to develop and implement business plans. **Dept. 287-7520** and **287-7620, CEI 772-5356**
- **NxLevel Business Planning**, coordinated by NRCS Heart of Maine Resource Conservation and Development Council, 368-4433
- **Food and Farms Resource Guide**—*Handbook for Maine Agricultural Businesses* provides farmers information on various agricultural subjects and programs, **287-3491**

Ag Business Loans and Grants

- Agricultural Marketing Loan Fund
- Potato Marketing Improvement Fund
- Agricultural Development Grant
- Agricultural Technical Assistance Grant Program
- Agricultural Water Source Development Cost Share Program

MAINE FARM BUREAU

A non-governmental, voluntary organization whose mission it is to analyze economic and public problems surrounding agriculture in Maine. Augusta, **622-4111**

MAINE FARM CREDIT

Specializes in lending to Maine's agricultural, fishing and forest products industries. Aroostook Regional Office, Presque Isle, **764-6431**; or Southern Regional Office, Auburn, **784-0193**

MAINE FARMLAND TRUST

A membership-based, non-profit organization working in the public's interest to protect Maine's precious farmland resources. Bucksport, **469-6465**

MAINE FARMLINK

A farm transfer program that connects farmers seeking farmland with retiring Maine farmers and farm owners who wish to see their agricultural lands remain active. Currently there are 35 prospective sellers and 67 prospective buyers statewide with 19 prospects in Knox County. Freedom, **382-3255**.

MAINE ORGANIC FARMERS AND GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

Developed from a loose affiliation of farmers and gardeners committed to growing healthy, chemical free food, to an internationally recognized advocate for food production that enhances and protects the ecological as well as economic vitality of rural communities. Unity, **568-4142**

MAINE WOMEN'S AGRICULTURAL NETWORK

A collaborative effort of farmers, agriculture and related non-profit, for profit and governmental agencies seeking to help women and other underserved individuals find the skills necessary to begin or continue farming profitably. Lisbon Falls, **800-287-1458**

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Assists farmers, landowners and communities with conserving and protecting natural resources. Each District works in partnership with the **USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), USDA Farm Service Agency** and other federal, state and local agencies, including the **NRCS-Resource Conservation and Development Council**. Warren, **273-2005**

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

A major educational outreach program of the University of Maine, with offices statewide. Waldoboro **800-244-2104** or statewide **800-287-0274**

Web Links

United States Department of Agriculture
www.usda.gov

USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
www.nrcs.usda.gov

Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources
www.maine.gov/argiculture/

“get real. get maine!”
www.getrealmaine.com

Maine State Web Portal
www.maine.gov

Maine Food and Farms Resource Guide
www.getrealmaine.com/connect/

References

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
USDA Farm Service Agency
Maine Revenue Service

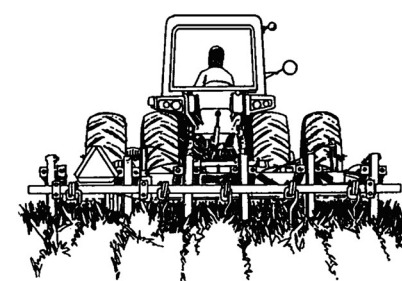
Knox County



2003-2004 COUNTY PROFILE OF MAINE AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES

Maine's agricultural future is inextricably linked to its ability to continue to build strong, long-lasting connections between farmers and the communities they serve. To help all citizens better understand how agriculture is connected to every aspect of life in Maine, this county profile provides citizens, community planners and natural resource conservation groups important facts about farmers, farms, farmland and agricultural enterprises in Knox County.

Farmers in Knox County



	1974	1978	1982	1992	1997
Farming as Principal Occupation	120	103	93	97	90
Male Operators (N)	NA	178	188	191	162
Female Operators	NA	20	23	26	32
Average Age	53	51	51	54	57

**USDA/Dept. of Commerce, Agriculture Census 1974-1997*

Statewide, farming has a unique connection to the history of Maine. Farmers are stewards of the land; well-managed farmland protects natural resources and creates beautiful open space. Many of Maine's first settlers were farmers whose fields, farmhouses and barns shaped Maine's historic landscape. Today, Maine's agricultural producers and processors annually contribute over 1.2 billion dollars to Maine's economy and employ 65,000 Maine people!

Knox County Farmland



	1974	1978	1982	1992	1997
Number of Farms	213	198	211	217	194
Total Acres (A)	32,675	32,509	31,703	27,622	25,183
Average Farm Size (A)	153	164	150	127	130
Total Cropland (A)	11,282	11,129	11,535	10,214	10,306
Total Pasture (A)	NA	3,735	4,416	4,079	2,659
Total Orchard (A)	90	125	83	86	117
Total Berry (A)	1,055	1,426	1,294	NA	NA
Total Hay (A)	4,322	4,878	5,776	5,732	5,848
Total Woodland (A)	17,650	18,441	16,896	13,876	12,323

**USDA/Dept. of Commerce, Agriculture Census 1974-1997*

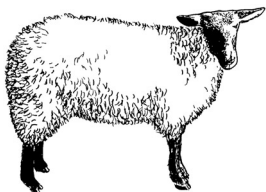
Land in farms decreased 9 percent from 27, 1992 to 25,183 in 1997. Full time farms decreased 7 percent from 97 farms in 1992 to 90 farms in 1997.



November
2003

Unique to Knox County

- There are 13 granges in the county. **County Grange**, Agnes Worthley, Master, 785-4429.
- County Chapter **Maine Farm Bureau**, President, Gary Balducci, Edgecomb, 882-5407
- **Knox County Blueberry Growers**, Richard Brodis, Hope 785-4433
- **Land Trust Organizations**
Coastal Mountains Land Trust (founded 1986) 236-7091; *Damariscotta Lake Watershed Association* (1966) 549-3836; *Georges River Land Trust* (1987) 594-5166; *Medomak Valley Land Trust* (1991) 832-5570
- **The State Historic Preservation Office** (287-2132) and Maine Preservation (775-7737) have information regarding the county's agriculturally related places of historic and cultural significance.



Farmland Protected in Knox County

PERMANENTLY PROTECTED

- 295 acres (1 farm) has been protected through the Land for Maine's Future Program
- 710 acres (4 farms) have been protected by 3 nonprofit organizations

TEMPORARILY PROTECTED

Maine Dept. of Agriculture

- 63 acres protected through Farms for the Future (5years)

USDA Farm Service Agency

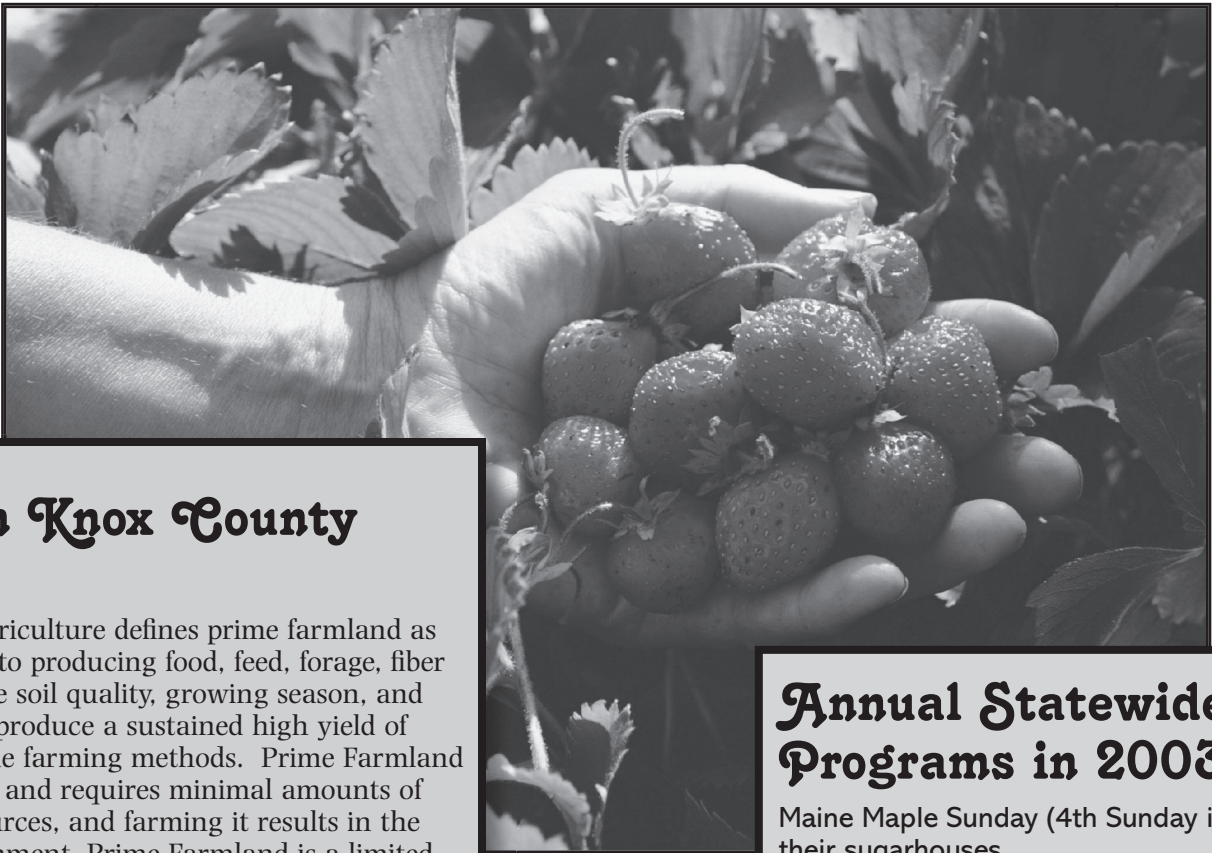
- 188 acres protected through Debt for Nature (50 years)

Enrolled in Farm and Open Space Tax Program

- 9,085 acres farmland in 2002 - 4,418 acres cropland plus 4,667 acres woodland
- 3,776 acres open space in 2001

Enrolled in Tree Growth Tax Program

- 20,860 acres in 2001



Prime Soils in Knox County

PRIME FARMLAND

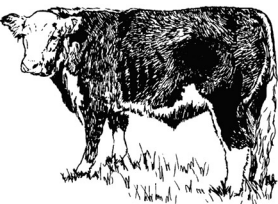
The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines prime farmland as the land that is best suited to producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce a sustained high yield of crops while using acceptable farming methods. Prime Farmland produces the highest yields and requires minimal amounts of energy and economic resources, and farming it results in the least damage to the environment. Prime Farmland is a limited strategic resource. No more of it is being created.

23,193 acres (estimated)

SOILS OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE

This is land, in addition to prime and unique farmlands, that is of statewide significance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. Criteria for defining and delineating this land are to be determined by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Generally, additional farmlands of statewide importance include those that are nearly prime farmland and that economically produce a high yield as prime farmlands if conditions are favorable.

39,305 acres (estimated)



Food, Farms* and Fairs in Knox County

- 22 Farmstands/Nurseries/Greenhouses open to the public
- 3 Farmers' Markets serving multiple communities
- 6 Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Farms contract directly with their customers who pay a fixed price in advance for fresh produce throughout the season.
- 2 Farms offer Pick-Your-Own fruits and vegetables
- 9 Farms host special on-farm events and activities such as pumpkin hunts, animal viewing, hayrides and school program.
- 1 Agricultural Fair (Union) drew up to 35,000 people in 2002

* Some farms may be counted in multiple categories. Not all farm activities and retail services are listed here.

Annual Statewide Events and Programs in 2003

Maine Maple Sunday (4th Sunday in March) 8 farms opened their sugarhouses.

Open Farm Day (4th Sunday in July) 6 farms welcomed the public onto their farms.

Maine Menus Month (October) 3 restaurants made special efforts to feature Maine grown, raised or harvested ingredients on their menus.

Great Maine Apple Day (November) many farms celebrated Maine's apple harvest.

Maine Senior FarmShare assisted 6 farmers with providing locally grown produce to 218 low-income seniors. Statewide, 185 farmers benefited from nearly \$900,000 in sales and additional seniors received fresh produce through food pantries and community meal sites.



Statewide market research in 2002 showed that 89 percent surveyed believe that buying locally grown food helps the state's economy.

Knox County Agricultural Sales

	1974	1988	1982	1992	1997
All crops	\$645,000	\$1,129,000	\$1,401,000	\$2,687,000	\$3,386,000
Livestock/poultry and products	\$7,939,000	\$8,898,000	\$7,533,000	\$3,733,000	\$2,218,000
Nursery and greenhouse products	\$325,000	NA	\$335,000	\$573,000	\$769,000
Fruits, nuts and berries	NA	\$663,000	\$785,000	\$1,429,000	\$2,087,000

*USDA/Dept. of Commerce, Agriculture Census 1974-1997